

# SHORT STORIES

EDITED BY  
C. ARTHUR PEARSON

(OF PEARSON'S WEEKLY)

No. 295.—VOL. XI.

FOR WEEK ENDING AUGUST 25, 1894.

[PRICE ONE PENNY.]

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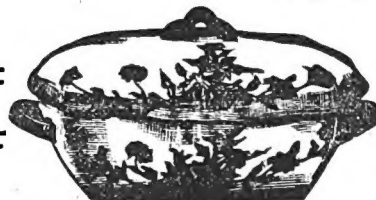
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## THE HAND that Murdered

TOIL! Toil!  
Toil! From the break of dawn till the fall of night; from Sabbath to Sabbath; from December to June, from June to December; nothing but toil. His brush must be always between his fingers, his palette for ever on his hand, beneath his all

and faces and figures and fancies must grow too incompetent touch.

But there is a faint glimmer of light ahead through all the inky darkness, to which he struggles bravely on, a glimmer that grows and grows as times pass, now diminishing, now increasing, according to his state of mind. For John Turner makes a brave fight against adversity, and he struggles manfully on through the gloom to the happiness that is the light, the happiness of being always with Marie Deloncle, the young French girl who lives across the way in the tall, solemn house with the broken chimney-pots and the musty green bedraggled curtains at the windows.

Their love has been the love of years, yet it has not grown stagnant, nor have their embraces lost any of their pristine sweetness.

Marie was a tall, well-developed girl, with a supple figure, and a wealth of handsome black hair surmounting a pair of eyes that had again and again appeared in Turner's pictures. She lived with her mother, and worked at a hat warehouse, where her French aptness for trimming brought in a small weekly wage barely enough to keep them free from hunger, and certainly not enough to save up to replace the old musty green curtains with a pair of a brighter colour.

Yet there was a glimmer of happiness ahead for both Marie and her lover. By scraping in one direction and another he had hoarded a few pounds, and kept them in the wall, where nobody knew of them but Marie; and often would he spread out the money before her, and together would they build their castles in Spain, and make life seem brighter than it had done since the last ones had been shattered.

Of an evening she would sit at her window and knit, and look across the way into the room of her lover who toiled at his pictures. And when it became too dark for work he would visit her and her mother and talk of the future.

One day the bright glimmer of light that led him on disappeared of a sudden. All the happiness of his soul was gone in a flash; the plans for the future were broken and gone; the darkness of his soul became intense; and with a

great sob he threw himself on his bed and buried his face in his hands.

Marie had deceived him. Mrs. Potter, his landlady, the fellow-lodgers—all the people in the street knew it, and told him of it; and, before he waited to hear her explanation, he saw nothing but misery before him. After a

while he roused himself and awaited her coming. But she did not come, nor did he see her at the window; and at nightfall he had not the courage nor strength of mind to seek her out and demand the reason for her neglect.

It was a night of misery—a night of hopes and fears—that he spent tossing about on his bed, maddened with the thought that he had lost her for ever, and the next moment reviling himself for his mad folly in believing the lying tongues of mischief-making scandalmongers.

Next morning he awoke from a short, restless doze, and, without taking any food, crushed his hat on his head and went across the road to her house. He knocked at the door of her room and went in and found her preparing the morning meal. She was not astonished at seeing him, and she went on with her work as if he was not there—in fact, as if she did not know of his existence at all.

Then she spoke, her eyes flashing with a strange light.

"Why did you not come to see me last night?"

Of course, he didn't know why. He had had no reason for breaking his general rule except the rumoured story of her deception, and he felt and looked abashed.

"I waited a long time for you," she went on, in her soft easy voice, moving about the room and laying the cloth. "I sent *mère* to her bed at last, and knew you would not come when the clock struck ten. It was unkind of you."

She looked so sweet, so innocent in her simple cotton gown, and her voice was so pretty that Turner strode over to her side and took her hand.

"Marie, where were you yesterday?"

"Me? Yesterday?"

She raised her eyebrows and assumed a look of childish surprise. "I was at my work. Why do you ask?"

"Because," he said sternly, trying in vain to fix his eyes upon hers as she gazed on the floor, "because I heard that you were seen with a man during the dinner hour. Come now, was that true?"

"And that was why you did not come and see me



"Why did you not come to see me last night?"

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last evening," she answered petulantly. "You could not trust me."

For a moment he was on the verge of relaxing the firm attitude he had taken up and of kissing her and making friends once more. But in her nervous, restless glance he found guilt, and continued,

"You have not yet told me if the rumour was true, Marie. Was it?"

She made a movement as if to release herself, but he strengthened his grasp of her arm so that she flushed with the pain of it.

"I did see my cousin, yes. He is over here in England. That is all."

"And why did you not tell me of this last night?"

"There was no need. Why should you know? He is my cousin."

And with that Turner had to be content, for nothing more would she tell him, and he left the house with a hard, gnawing pain at his heart, and a misery over his soul that he had never known before.

That evening she was at her window, and smiled to him when she raised her head from her work, but that was not often, for she seemed more thoughtful than she had ever been, and his share of her smiles was small. At dusk he went and sat with her, but she was quiet, and did not speak much, nor when he kissed her good night did he feel the responding pressure of her arms nor the kiss upon his lips.

Before the next day was half over he heard again another rumour that corresponded with the first. Marie had been seen by one of her factory hands speaking with a foreign-looking man, who had walked part of the way home with her.

She was not at her accustomed post in the evening until it was almost time for him to stop his work, and then she appeared and called across to him to say that she was too unwell to see him that night.

When he heard what she said, he did not move from the chair on which he was sitting for fully a minute. He had gone quite white, and stared at her with eyes that said nothing, nor meant nothing. She looked frightened, until he rose slowly and disappeared into the shadow of his room, then she closed her window.

Turner sank on his bed. His head throbbed wildly and his eyes burned in his head. He was a strongly imaginative fellow, with a melancholy habit of looking at absolutely the worst side of things that was possible, and as he lay tossing about he thought of the happy days he had spent with Marie, that were all past and gone, of the cutting and contriving to

save sufficient money to marry her, all of which was useless to him now, of the thief who had robbed him of her love, who would kiss the lips he had so often kissed, who would hold in his arms the form he had so often embraced. And he groaned aloud in the agony of his thoughts, and bitterly cursed his fate.

Any ordinary man would have discovered the whereabouts of this French cousin of Marie's and, having brought himself face to face with him, would have ascertained at once how

matters stood, and got some satisfaction out of the whole business.

But John Turner was not an ordinary man. His Bohemian life had excited his sensibilities, and although he loved with a wild love and hated with a bitter hatred, his finer feelings told him that if Marie loved another, whoever it might be, he would not stand in the way of her happiness.

This was all very noble, but it is not human; but his highly sensitive nature would not allow him to see it in any other light, so that when morning broke he had resigned himself to his melancholy fate, and had planned out his course of action.

As the dinner-hour approached he left the house and took up a position where he might see Marie come out of her place of business. The time arrived, and with it a Frenchman, who greeted her cordially when her anxious eyes rested upon his. That was enough for Turner. He went back to his dismal lodgings, lone, sad, and broken-hearted.

Taking a sovereign from the place where it had lain so long he went out into the street, and made his way to the nearest railway station. Then he booked for a place twenty miles down in the country, and took his seat in the train. As the houses became fewer and fewer, and the fields and trees more frequent, there crept over his soul a lighter feeling of pleasure—a thrilling delight, a happiness that he had never before known.

It was so many years since he had enjoyed the freshness of God's undefiled country, that he positively yearned for the time to come when he might step out into the broad white roads, and ramble unrestrained through the woods that capped the long low-lying range of downs.

That night, on his return, he bounded up the rickety stairs to his attic as he had never done before, and threw himself on his bed thoroughly fatigued. His whole body was throbbing with the exercise, and the usually sluggish blood coursed rapidly through his veins.

All day long he had driven the thoughts of his false sweetheart out of his mind, he had exercised a will power that refused to come to him while his body lacked vigour. His plans for the future were simple. He would sell up his miserable little home and betake himself to another part of the town; he would make a practice of taking jaunts into the country at least once a week with the money that he had over from the daily expenses; instead of saving it up, he would start life afresh, and the Academy would find room for his productions before another year was out, a state of affairs that hitherto he had only vaguely thought of when he painted only to sell.

Next day he made preparations for his departure, and gave notice to the landlady. In the evening he went over to Marie's rooms to bid her farewell, an undertaking that he would have shirked like a coward while his body lacked vitality. In her room, and talking to her and her mother, was Jacques Maynard, the stranger. Turner had not bargained for this untimely and inconvenient meeting.

He looked from one to the others in turn, then, with an impulse that was not of himself, he went over to the Frenchman and boxed his ears. Turner was a big man, and, as he stood in the twilight, glowering at the Frenchman, who had tremblingly curled himself up in the chair holding up his hands to avoid further blows, he looked a formidable antagonist.

The sight of Marie, flushed and heated, with her dark flashing eyes, and her quivering lips, re-aroused in his heart the passion that he had believed, that he had hoped, was gone for ever. He loved her again with a force that he had never known before, and the jealous rage that filled his heaving breast would have strengthened his arm to any deed.

He was a different man now to the pallid, slaving, bloodless artist, toiling from morning till night at pictures that brought in only a few shillings, and he believed that this new departure of manliness in his nature would retrieve the love that he fancied he had lost.

Madame Deloncle, after the lapse of a few seconds, found strength to give a little scream. This brought the trio to their senses. Turner strode over to Marie's side, and whispered harshly in her ear,

"Do you love him?" pointing to the Frenchman.



Took his seat in the train.

But she was too terrified to answer, for in all her life she had never once seen Turner so mad with rage, so uncontrollably violent as now.

Then, pressing a hot kiss on her lips, he went out into the street.

The rain was falling heavily when he reached the front door, and by the time he reached his room it was striking the patched roof above him smartly. The wind blew in strong gusts, shaking and rattling the windows, while the drops of water drifted in between the cracks, filling the air with a chilly dampness.

Once in his room, he threw himself down in a chair and fell to cursing the man who had stepped in between him and his sweetheart. As thought followed thought, he grew more and still more violent as to the course of action he intended to take up. Until this interloper arrived on the scene he was everything on earth to Marie. And he would yet be so—when the French dog had gone, no matter where.

But go, he certainly should, and the sooner the better. He would throw up all thought of moving now, unless he took Marie with him, and she, he was certain, would acquiesce if only the third party were out of the way.

To-morrow, then, there would be one fiend less on this earth, and he would marry Marie, who should never know that his hands were dyed with the blood of the man who had attempted to filch her love from him. To-morrow, the world would be brighter for him and for her. To-morrow, God's judgment would be meted out upon the cowardly interloper through the hand of his servant. And, revelling in the anticipation of the deed, he got into bed, and fell asleep.

Next morning Mrs. Potter took up her breakfast, and found him lying cold and lifeless in his bed. She let fall the tray from her hands and flew shrieking downstairs and out into the street, and shortly after a couple of policemen took possession of the room and its ghastly occupant.

An inspector came a little later and made notes of the position of the different pieces of furniture in the apartment: Washstand in the back right corner, facing window; foot of bed against wall opposite window, head facing window; easel, close to window, bearing picture of Arab chief in act of falling—half finished; lay figure dressed as Arab chief on floor near bed, right side, as if it had been knocked down; old horse pistol, empty, lying alongside bed, muzzle pointing towards deceased, lying on its left side, hammer towards window, distance from bed three feet, ditto from wall at head of bed four feet three inches; large pool of water near lay figure, smaller pools near washstand and easel, all probably from leaks in the roof.

The inquest was held, and when everything concerning the feud between the deceased and Jacques Maynard and the quarrel on the night before the death, and of Maynard's threat to revenge himself upon Turner, a threat that he made before leaving the presence of Marie, and all this and much more, was known, the coroner passed a verdict of wilful murder by Jacques Maynard, and next day he was arrested and charged before a magistrate.

The case was clear and strong against the Frenchman. Madame Deloncle and her daughter had given evidence at the inquest, and both of them, greatly agitated and frightened at the solemn proceedings answered all questions put to them without daring to hesitate or to speak an untruth.

This state of affairs resulted in much more being known concerning the positions taken up by the deceased and the accused than would otherwise have been the case, for Marie being unacquainted with the English laws, did not dare to shield her cousin by playing upon her knowledge as she would certainly have done had the case been brought before a French court of Justice.

Consequently, every word that fell from her lips wove a fatal net round Maynard. By the magistrate he was convicted and sent for trial.

Marie was brokenhearted. It was only too true by her demeanour that the arrest of Jacques caused her tenfold more misery than the death of her former lover; yet, in spite of her affection for the accused, she fully believed that it was he who had committed the murder, for she was aware of his violent passions and of the facilities which offered themselves for obtaining access to Turner's rooms while he slept.

Maynard she had loved when she lived at Lierve, the little town in the south-west of France; but she had believed when she came to England that she would never see him again. When she met him one day coming along the street the old love was rekindled, and M. Maynard usurped her English lover.

The trial came on. At the end of the first day a young Frenchman from the body of the court, who had been listening to the proceedings, made his way to the counsel for the defence, and conferred for some time with him on a subject that appeared to throw a fresh light on the matter.

The learned counsel asked the judge at the moment of leaving whether he would grant a couple of days' remand until the conclusion of some experiments that would probably be of intense moment in the issue of the case. The respite was given, and the prisoner removed to his cell.

On the third day the young stranger entered the witness box. He proceeded to give a short and concise outline of his connection with the case, which, he explained, did not extend further than a casual hearing of the proceedings in the court a couple of days before. He was, he said, a student, and his chief study was capillary force. He then went on to say:

"I have made a minute examination of the room in which the unfortunate John Turner met with his death, and I have been ably and intelligently assisted in my researches by Inspector Johnstone, to whom I tender my best thanks.

"I found that on reference to the unfinished picture resting on the easel in the deceased's room that it represented an episode in the Soudan War, the principal actor being an Arab chief in the act of falling dead. In his hand was a pistol.

"Lying on the floor near the bed was a lay figure dressed in the garb of an Arab chief, while close by lay a pistol. This pistol beyond a shadow of doubt was originally in the hand of the lay figure.

"Wood, when moistened, expands. In ancient stone and slate quarries wooden wedges were forced between cracks, and soaked with water, with the result that the wood, by expanding, split the solid mass. Capillary force is irresistible.

"You are already aware of the fact that a large pool of water was found near the lay figure, which had fallen from a leak in the roof. The rain had been falling all night through. The stream of water had doubtless run for several hours on to the wooden hand of the figure. The joints of all the fingers are, I find, fashioned to closely resemble the movements of those of the human hand, and beyond all doubt one finger was placed in the trigger-guard and over the trigger.

"The pressure required in firing the pistol would have been readily afforded by the general swelling of the whole hand, as it requires only the slightest movement to release the hammer.

"My theory is, therefore, gentlemen, that the water, falling upon the model's hand, fired the pistol.

"I am willing to conduct a number of experiments to prove that what I say is borne out by fact, but, I think you will agree with me, this is unnecessary."

Yet, had this inanimate hand not taken John Turner's life, he might even then have been standing, a trembling criminal, in the dock from which Jacques Maynard was now released.



*A lay figure dressed in the garb of an Arab chief.*

# A JEALOUS GHOST.

THREE photographs hung over the mantel-piece in the parlour behind the bright shop of the young German apothecary. One was a pretty girl, another an old man, the third a young man. They were framed alike, and no one had ever noticed anything particular about them, until one evening one of the young Schaeffer's compatriots, Professor Schwartz, chanced to come into the room, and, having contemplated the etchings and the water-colours which graced the walls, placed himself before the mantel-piece, and after staring through his blue spectacles for at least fifteen minutes, said solemnly:

"My good friend, Schaeffer, perhaps you will be kind enough to tell me if I am crazy, or if this gentleman is transparent? It appears to me that I can see some shelves and bottles directly through his coat and vest. Is it so?"

"It is so," said Schaeffer, lighting his painted china pipe at the brass student-lamp. "You make no mistake, Doctor Schwartz, I assure you."

"It is some clever trick of photography, I suppose?" asked the doctor.

"It is one of the facts of a tragedy," said young Schaeffer. "It is something that haunts me day and night. I should like to speak of it to some one who can keep a secret; a doctor must be able to do that."

"Especially, if, like me, he is a bachelor," said Doctor Schwartz. "I give my promise to repeat nothing that you tell me."

"We will have a glass of Rhine wine together then," said the druggist: "and while I get the bottle, look at the other photographs—the one to the right is the only girl I ever loved; the other is Doctor Hoffman, of whom I shall have something to say."

"And the transparent gentleman?" asked the doctor.

"I keep that for the story," said young Schaeffer.

Ten minutes later the two faced each other at the table, their glasses between them, and the room full of smoke, and Adolphe Schaeffer began thus:—

"At noon to-day it was exactly five years since a note was handed to me, signed by Doctor Alexander Hoffman, and asking me to call upon him at once. I obeyed the summons promptly, and found him in his shop. He was, as I am, an apothecary."

"He was evidently in deep distress of some kind, and soon told me what it was. He had lost his only son, Theodore, whom he adored, and who was his assistant in his business, and his destined successor."

"Broken down with sorrow, the old man was unable to do all that fell upon him, and hearing that I wanted a position he had summoned me. He desired me to board with him, and offered an excellent salary."

"However, the low ceilinged shop, situated in a narrow street, and having very small flat windows into which the sun could scarcely come, was so gloomy, and the old man in his sorrow so depressing, that I felt as though to accept the offer would be to bury myself alive, and was doing my best to decline it with civility, when a very beautiful girl appeared at the door of the inner room. She had the face of an angel; her hair was golden, and her eyes a beautiful dark-blue; her dress was black. Seeing a stranger she retired; but in that moment I gave her my heart. Love at first sight is a serious fact."

"I concluded that she was the old man's daughter, and the thought of seeing her every day filled me with rapture. I changed the wording of the sentence I had half finished into an acceptance, and established myself in the house as soon as possible."

"If ever sorrow dwelt in man's abode, it rested there. The very walls seemed to mourn for the dead Theodore; the old servant cried her eyes red every day; the father gave miserable glances at the empty place at table when he sat at meals."

"The girl was a very Niobe. Shortly I made the discovery that she was not old Hoffman's daughter, but the child of a friend, whom Mrs. Hoffman had taken to bring up, and that she had been betrothed to Theodore."

"However, this did not put an end to my hopes, but simply postponed them. I knew that young people usually outlived the greatest grief. I was quiet and sympathetic. I made myself useful to old Hoffman, and soon won my way into his heart."

"A year had passed before I received my first smile from Lina Henzel. It was in the little garden, where I had been helping her water the flowers. That was the first, not the last. I took my steps softly, one at a time. Finally, I understood that I might speak, and did so."

"She smiled, and then sobbed:

"'You will not ask me to forget poor Theodore?' she pleaded."

"I reassured her, and she gave me her promise. For awhile we kept our secret, but Doctor Hoffman soon discovered it."

"'Children,' he said one day at breakfast, 'I know what thoughts are in your hearts, and they do not offend me. Theodore has been truly mourned, but he would not wish Lina to live the life of a nun. Besides, if you marry each other, we can all live together until my time comes, and then I will leave you everything. It gives me some hope of domestic comfort in my old age. You, Adolph, will be a second son to me.'"

"I thanked him affectionately. I had now begun to love even the dark little house where I had first seen Lina."

"That night, however, bad dreams troubled me, and I awoke unrefreshed, and with a strange foreboding of evil. Dr. Hoffman was away on business, and I had sole charge of the shop. The customers were numerous, and a great doctor himself brought in a very particular prescription. It was while I was making this up that I felt a hand grasp my wrist, as a teacher does that of a younger child whom he assists to form his first letter on a slate."

"But instead of aiding me, this thing that clutched me prevented me from doing what I wished. It was impossible for me to open the jars to extract the contents. At last, terrified and trembling, I flung myself in a chair, and I saw—I swear it—all the proper jars lifted from their places and the prescription correctly made up by some invisible being. The package was also labelled and tied up and then vanished, and the next moment I heard the doctor call me."

"'I must have been asleep, I think,' he said. 'At least my wits were wandering, for I did not see you place this in my hand. Good morning.' He was off."

"'You see you are not wanted here,' said a voice at my ear. 'In fact, consider yourself dismissed.'"

"I looked about me; there was no one there. I rushed into the shop. Several customers were waiting, but the moment I attempted to serve anything my wrists were once more imprisoned in that vice-like grasp. I was obliged once more to seat myself."

"Fortunately these people only needed cologne water, soap, and some patent medicines in bottles, and I desired them to help themselves, saying that I was faint, and must take a few minutes to recover myself. They did as I asked, hoped I would feel better shortly, and left me alone."

"With an indescribable terror upon me I hurried into the room, where Lina sat at work."

"'Ah, Adolph, how pale you are!' she said. 'Are you ill?'"

"'I do not know. I am afraid so,' I said. 'I am unable to make up the prescriptions.'"

"I seated myself near her and took her hand in mine. On

that instant that iron grasp was upon me; not on my wrist this time, but on my neck; and gasping for breath I was flung violently to the floor.

"You are not wanted here either," said the same voice that had before spoken to me. "You had better go."

"Although I felt exactly as though human hands had seized me and thrown me down, to Lina it appeared that I had swooned or had vertigo.

"And you were not yourself, Adolph," she said; "for you told me I was not wanted and had better go."

"Indeed, I did not speak," I said.

"Indeed, you did," said Lina. "There was no one else in the room." Then she began to weep.

There was a pause. Doctor Schwartz seemed to ruminate, Adolph Schaeffer to be lost in reverie. Suddenly he started to his feet and began to pace the room.

"Thus it began," he said; "to give you the details would require hours. Ah, it was horrible! In the presence of Doctor Hoffman it contented itself with making me drop glasses, drop jars, fall down, and do all sorts of mischief, by catching me by the wrists and ankles, or by the coat collar, but if I were alone in the shop there came a repetition of the work of the first day.

"At last, one afternoon a girl entered, and I was about to attempt to wait on her, when suddenly she screamed and rushed out of the place.

"Afterwards she told everyone that she had seen Theodore Hoffman's ghost behind the counter; but as she was only a little servant from the country, she was simply laughed at for her pains.

"However, this gave me an idea. I was fond of photography, and rather expert. One morning I brought my camera into the shop, and, when the invisible being began to make up a prescription he had snatched from my hand, commenced operations.

"The result was the picture about which you asked me. I myself saw nothing, but it was developed upon the plate. The doctor had a likeness of his son Theodore. This was the same man, save that, as you see, he was transparent.

"I hid the picture; I tried to bear my misery as well as I could. I hoped to weary the revengeful ghost; but though at times he allowed me to be myself in the shop, he never permitted me to touch the lips of my betrothed wife.

"She, angry and astonished, grew very cool to me; and at last one night I was awakened by a touch upon my forehead, and, opening my eyes, saw a figure at my bedside—the figure in the photograph.

"Come, then," it said in that well-known voice, 'why do you not go?'

"Why do you wish to ruin my life?' I asked. 'What have I done?'

"Robbed me of my father's affection, my proper work, and, above all, of Lina's love," said the spirit. "However, you cannot keep my treasure; you must go. I have no hatred to you, but this is my place which you usurp. The fight is useless."

"I shall fight all the same," I said.

"The ghost vanished with a laugh.

"Never shall I forget the next day; its events are burned into my soul. The invisible hands scarcely left me; I appeared to work destruction wherever I went. I was made to be offensive and even insolent to the best customers.

"Late at night, the professor and I sat alone in the little parlour where I had been so happy.

"What has happened to you, Adolph?" he said. "Why have you changed so?'

"It was a relief to tell him all. He listened gravely.

"I believe you," he said. "I have reason. When I am alone I now constantly see my son standing near me. There is reproach in his eyes. Adolph, you must go."

"I knew it must be, and bowed my head.

"And Lina?" I asked.

"She must not know the reason," he answered. "I will quarrel with you and break the match. Privately, I will give you a sum of money to enable you to set up business in England."

"I cannot part from Lina," I said.

"You must, since Theodore desires it," said the old man."

There was another pause. Adolph Schaeffer reseated himself at the table and refilled his glass.

"It was as Theodore wished," he said. "My life became unbearable, and I went through the farce of being quarrelled with by Doctor Hoffman and dismissed.

"Theodore had become such a real person to me that I felt like a person who had been about to marry a woman who had thought herself a widow, but to whom her husband suddenly returned.

"The fact that Lina knew nothing of the facts of the case caused me much suffering, but the spectral Theodore would not permit her to be told; he never touched or approached her.

"Later, Dr. Hoffman wrote to me that he assisted him efficiently in the prescription department, and that he frequently saw him, but that Lina never did. Later he wrote me that the shop had gained a reputation for being haunted, and that his patrons had one by one departed.

"However, I am very well off," he said, "and may retire from business. I am very happy in the constant company of my beloved son Theodore."

"Then for a while there was no more correspondence. One day a letter reached me—it was from Lina.

"My dear old papa Hoffman is dead," she said. "He passed away one night in sleep. He was always kind to me, save in the manner of which you know, in which you suffered equally with myself. But he had hallucinations before he died, and was thought by many to be mad. However, it was only on one point. I mention it, because it explains his unreasonable quarrel with you during an attack of illness which should have awakened sympathy. Be assured that that was the only feeling it aroused in my heart."

"Ah," said Dr. Schwartz, "the young lady would be very well pleased to renew the old engagement."

"Perhaps," said Adolph Schaeffer, sighing—"perhaps. But as she, without knowing it, belongs to Theodore Hoffman—who will undoubtedly claim her in the other world—I shall be very careful never to meet her again in this, neither do I believe that Theodore would permit me to do so.

"Everyone has a tragedy in his life—this is mine; but I asked you to keep my secret, because I am engaged to Miss Millwood, a lovely and estimable young lady, to whom I shall try to be a perfect husband, and for whom I have great affection. Of course, she must never hear this story.

"The day before the wedding the portraits of Lina and Theodore will disappear from my walls, and I will strive to banish them from my memory for ever."

The clock struck eleven. Doctor Schwartz started to his feet.

"Adolph Schaeffer, you tell an excellent ghost story," he said. "If I did not know that man goes out as a candle in a puff of wind, I might believe it."

"But how do you know that?" cried Adolph.

"Oh," said Schwartz, "I have dissected many bodies, but never discovered the seat of the soul! Good night."

He marched away, laughing; but the young assistant, who, with his ear to the partition, had been listening most of the time, could never quite make up his mind whether Adolph Schaeffer believed the story that he told or had merely been amusing himself.

## NOT TO BE MISSED.

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## A FOOL'S ADVICE.

THE man who told me this is no longer a young man; he was not young when he confided the tale to me, and that was quite fifteen years ago.

He was a little, lean, dark-complexioned—a truly foreign-looking man, although he was an Englishman. Long years of residence in India had burned him to the colour of mahogany, and the hot, pestiferous winds of the great peninsula seemed to have well-nigh mummified him, so dried and shrivelled did he appear.

For convenience I will call him Doctor Goslett, although that is not his name, you may be sure; nor is it anything like his real name. He had been a surgeon in the Indian army for a long term, having gone out there while still a young man—just after taking his "sheepskin," in fact.

"It was when I had been in India but a few months," he said, in the course of his reminiscences, "and was stationed at Raipur, in the Orissa district.

"At that time the 'old stagers' in the army—men who had been in the country for a long term, and knew its ins and outs—were in the habit of chaffing new-comers unmercifully, and making them the butt of all sorts of practical jokes.

"I had been afflicted in the usual manner by the younger officers in my regiment (the —th Lancers), and I presume that I was as much fun as a box of monkeys for them. Being a quick-tempered and not over-wise youth, it was hard for me to keep my passion from getting the better of me; and, once having lost control of it over some trivial 'sell' of which one of the mess made me the victim, I was at once selected as a promising subject for all the stock jokes of the regimental mess-room.

"The man who had first caused me to lose my temper was a certain Lieutenant Mainwarring—Henry Mainwarring—a handsome, dashing fellow, with an inexhaustible fund of good humour, and a man who was seldom, if ever, careless of the feelings of others. His joke was a simple enough little thing, and would not have injured me in the least, had I had the good sense to keep my temper.

"Unfortunately, I did not control myself, and the result was, as I state, I became the butt of half the jokes of the mess. Mainwarring never entered into any of them again, but nevertheless, in my unreasoning anger, I laid the whole trouble at his door. Each time I was made the victim of my comrades' chaff, I grew more bitter against the lieutenant. He had first discovered my vulnerable point, and held me up to the ridicule of the mess, and I could not forget it.

"Goodness knows, the life we led at that little station was so dull that anything was welcome to the young fellows, so that it gave a little spice to their existence. I should have been satisfied to lend myself to their entertainment without feeling ugly over it," and the doctor smiled grimly.

"My confrère, Doctor Fearing, a much older man, told me as much, and often advised me to pay no attention to the harmless chaff of the others. But I couldn't see it. To me their jokes were the deadliest insults, and I believe that I hated Mainwarring as intensely as I should had he done me a premeditated injury.

"The lieutenant really endeavoured to repair the wrong he had unwittingly done me by urging the others to let me alone, and refusing to countenance or take part in any joke in which I was to be victimised; but they were a wild set, and I was too promising a subject for them to wholly give up their sport. Besides, I openly showed my antagonism for Mainwarring, and, as he was the most popular man in the regiment—'Handsone Harry',

they called him—my course naturally did not gain me any friends.

"I was passionately fond of botanising, and, being simply assistant-surgeon, had much more time to myself than did the majority of the subalterns. The country about Raipur is, or was, nothing but jungle, and I had every opportunity to follow my chosen study in a field exactly to my taste. In a few months, I obtained a very handsome cabinet of specimens indeed.

"My brother officers told me long and blood-curdling yarns about man-eating tigers and cheetahs which infested the jungle, but I had never seen any sign of the creatures during my rambles, and began to believe their stories to be some of those myths usually trotted out for the benefit of new-comers.

"After a time, I began to be weary of always lugging a gun about with me, and quite frequently went on short trips about the station with no other weapon than my revolver or a short hunting knife. This coming to the notice of the colonel, he took me to task for it at dinner one day.

"You really ought not to do it, you know," he said mildly.

"He was a mild man always, and seldom made his commands other than requests. 'There are beasts in the jungle that would think nothing of snapping up a full-grown man.'

"Oh, Goslett wouldn't be averse to a bout with a tiger or leopard, armed or not," sneered somebody.

"Of course that was enough to 'rile' me, and I spoke up sharply:

"To a coward danger lurks behind every spear of grass. Don't accuse me of running from my shadow.'

"The colonel turned away with a shrug of his shoulders at this ungracious reply, and doubtless put me down in his own mind for the foolish young cub that I was; but Mainwarring looked up from his position directly opposite me at the table, and said gravely:

"What the colonel says is only too true, Goslett. My man told me only yesterday that a regular man-eater has been ranging the jungle lately between here and Odorro. It is unsafe for any fellow to venture into the forest without a good weapon to fall back upon.'

"My feelings were still rankling from the sneering remark addressed me but a moment before, and, of course, I selected the well-meaning Mainwarring on whom to vent my spite.

"I do not doubt, lieutenant, that you have my welfare entirely at heart," I said, with a sneer. 'But I haven't issued a circular requesting advice on the subject.'

"Some of the men looked up quickly, expecting the lieutenant to take offence at my insolence; but he only laughed good-naturedly.

"Well," he said, in what I considered an air of insufferable superiority, 'you'd better take a fool's advice and not go wandering through these jungles as though you were at home on your father's farm.'

"Thank you," I responded, boiling over with rage; 'I've been in several places since I left my father's estate, even though I may not have had your experience in India, lieutenant. And if such experiences make a man a coward, I'm glad I've had none!'

"Mainwarring flushed up like fire, and our neighbours ceased eating, and waited breathlessly for what should follow. It was apparent to all, I presume, that I had deliberately insulted the lieutenant—or, at least, tried to do so. But I must admit that Mainwarring was remarkably forbearing, considering the way I had treated him.

"Experience makes a man less foolhardy sometimes; but it's a hard schoolmaster, as my copy-book used to say," he returned, after a minute spent in controlling his indignation. 'You'll find a fool's advice—aye, a coward's advice—sometimes worth following.'

"He looked at me meaningly, and I knew that his words were meant as a warning to me that I was going too far; but my heart was bursting with rage against him and against my other comrades, and I stared him squarely in the eye and replied:

"I consider the advice given me as that of a fool and a coward!" I declared hotly. 'You have rightly named it.'

"There was a babel of voices as I delivered this direct insult.



He was a little, lean, dark-complexioned man.

at 'Handsome Harry' Mainwarring, and several of the fellows about me sprang to their feet. I certainly had done nothing to increase my popularity with the regiment. But the lieutenant waved them all aside, and half rising from his chair and bending his flashing eyes on me, with a sudden fierceness which almost made me quail, demanded:

"Do I understand Mr. Goslett, that you are ready to answer for that remark?"

"You may understand just that, sir!" I declared, for I had a certain amount of dogged persistence which would never allow me to back out of anything.

"Then, by Jove, sir, you shall answer for it!" he cried, his face blazing with wrath; and he immediately rose and left the room.

"The younger officers looked at me askance; but I was too mad to pay any attention to them or to care how far the matter went. More than one duel had been fought already that year among officers of the Indian army, for there were not the strict laws against it then that there are at present.

"Soon after, I left the mess-room myself, and taking my stick, went out for one of my lonely walks, ostensibly for specimens, but really to quiet my nerves and think the matter over.

"I was in a scrape, I knew, for Harry Mainwarring was an expert with either sword or pistol, while I could use either with but slight skill. If he challenged me, I should of course have the right to choose my weapons: but which should I choose, and what advantage would I obtain by choosing either?

"Naturally I was in no condition to hunt for specimens, although I had slung my bag over my shoulder on leaving the station; but I tramped on and on for several miles while I thought over the situation in which my abominable temper had placed me.

"I could hope for no mercy from Mainwarring (I did not want any, in fact, for with all my faults I was not a craven); for the lieutenant had been terribly enraged, and when a man who is slow to wrath once gets angry, stand from under, say I!

"Well, in my state of mind I had taken no thought of the way I had come from the station, and finally I awoke to the fact that I had reached a part of the jungle which was totally unfamiliar to me. I pressed on a bit further in the hope of finding some landmark to guide me, but the deeper I went the more certain became the fact of my non-acquaintance with the place.

"Finally I reached a little glade in the centre of the thick jungle and halted a few moments to try to gain my bearings from the sun; but I was not certain of any point of the compass and was almost at my wit's end.

"While I stood there at the side of the glade wholly undecided as to what course to pursue, I heard a sudden crashing in the jungle in front of me, and in a moment a man burst through the reeds and entered the glade. He stopped at once when he saw me, and to my surprise I recognised Mainwarring himself.

"I could not ask him the way to the station. I remember that I drew myself up haughtily and vouchsafed him no salutation as he freed himself from the reeds and creepers and stepped fully out into the opening. He appeared surprised to see me, too; but in an instant a terrible change came over his features.

"He was armed with a heavy express rifle—a weapon which carried a ball like that of a young cannon. Hardly had he

entered the glade and obtained a fair glimpse of me when, with a slight exclamation he unslung the piece, and the next instant it was at his shoulder and I was looking straight into the black barrel of the weapon!

"His eyes seemed to blaze with fierce passion, and for an instant I cowered back, realising that he had me completely at his mercy. I did not stop to think that such a course as I believed him to be following was entirely foreign to the man's nature.

"Don't move!" he shouted, in a hoarse, strained voice.

"But I did move. I had no idea of standing there and being shot down like a dog, and although I had no other weapon than my heavy stick, my fingers tightened on that, and the next moment the staff flew hurtling through the air at my antagonist.

"At the very instant I made my cast his heavy weapon blazed forth, the echoes of the shot rebounding with a roar like thunder from the deep forest about me.

"I heard the shriek of the bullet as it passed me, and the next instant a terrific roar of fury sounded from my rear, and some heavy body bounded against me and carried me headlong to the earth.

"Like a flash I rolled out from beneath the struggling snarling beast and sprang to my feet. It was a huge tiger-cat, and for the next few moments the earth for some yards

round was torn up by the dying struggles of the beast. Mainwarring's bullet had saved my life. He had seen the brute crouching in the reeds behind me, and had nobly rescued me from a fearful death.

"Then I looked for the lieutenant himself. What was my horror to find him lying flat upon his back on the spongy sward, his rifle lying at his side. My aim had been only too true, for his upturned face was covered with blood from a deep cut in his forehead where my stick had struck him!

"I ran to his side at once, but he was unconscious. The wound

was a serious one, as my professional instinct told me; but, fortunately, I had some things at hand to assist me in the dressing of his hurt, and as soon as it was as comfortable as the rude appliances could make it, I raised him in my arms and set out for the station.

"Fortunately I had noticed from which direction he had approached the glade, and returning that way I quickly came upon landmarks which I recognised, and after a terribly hard tramp arrived at the quarters.

"Mainwarring was still unconscious, but after Dr. Fearling and I had worked over him some time he came to himself. But he was in sick-bay for weeks, and do what we could we were not able to save the sight of both his eyes. The upper lid of his left optic had been torn by the pointed end of the stick, and in that climate little things lead to great.

"I did not spare myself in recounting the adventure, and you may guess that I was almost completely ostracised by my brother officers, for 'Handsome Harry' had been the pride of the regiment. I deserved it, however; but after a while I was changed to another station, and profiting by my serious lesson, managed to get on much better with my brother officers there.

"Harry sold out and went into indigo planting; but, although his friends of the—th Lancers never forgave me for the injury I had done him, he and I were, ever after, the best of friends, and I count him as such now."



"Do I understand, Mr. Goslett, that you are ready to answer for that remark?"

# AN ANCESTOR TO BE PROUD OF.

WHEN the bigotry of the last James compelled his subjects to take up arms against him, Sir John Cochrane was one of the most formidable enemies to his dangerous usurpations, and one of the most prominent actors in Argyle's rebellion. For ages a destructive doom seemed to have hung over the house of Campbell, uniting in a common ruin all who joined their fortunes to the cause of its chief. Sir John Cochrane was no exception.

He was surrounded by the king's troops, and, after a long and desperate resistance, he was taken prisoner and was tried and condemned to die upon the scaffold. He had but a few days to live, and his jailer awaited only the arrival of the death-warrant to lead him to execution. His friends had visited him and exchanged the last farewells—all but one; his daughter Grizel, the pride of his house, his dearest treasure, she alone had not come to receive his last blessing.

Night had fallen on the prison, and the father sat with his head pressed against the cold, damp walls of his cell, longing for a last look of his favourite child, when the door opened and the keeper entered, followed by a young and beautiful girl. Her person was tall and commanding, her eyes dark, bright, and tearless, with a sorrow too deep to be wept away. The unhappy prisoner raised his head.

"My child! My own Grizel!" he exclaimed, as he pressed her to his heart.

"My father! My dear father!" sobbed the miserable maiden.

"Your interview must be short—very short," said the jailer, as he closed the door and left them together.

"Heaven help and comfort thee, my precious child!" said Sir John. "I had feared that I should die without bestowing my blessing on the head of my daughter, and that stung me more than death. But thou art come, my love—thou art come; and the last blessing of thy wretched father—"

"Nay, father, forbear!" she exclaimed; "not thy last blessing—not thy last! My father shall not die!"

"Be calm, be calm, my child!" he said. "Would to heaven that I could comfort thee, my own. There is no hope; within three days thou and all my little ones will be—," fatherless he would have said, but the word died upon his lips.

"Three days," she repeated, raising her head from his breast, but eagerly pressing his hand; "three days! then there is hope—my father shall live. Is not my grandfather the friend of Father Petre, the confessor and master of the king? From him he shall beg the life of his son, and my father shall not die."

"Nay, nay, my Grizel," he returned, "be not deceived; there is no hope. Already my doom is sealed. Already the king has signed the order for my execution, and the messenger of death is now on his way."

"Yet my father shall not—shall not die!" she repeated emphatically, and clasping her hands. "Heaven speed a daughter's purpose," she exclaimed; and, turning to her father, said calmly, "we part now, but we shall meet again."

"What do you mean, my child?" he inquired eagerly, gazing anxiously on her face.

"Ask not now," she replied, "my father, ask not now. Pray for me, and bless me, but not with thy last blessing."

He again pressed her to his heart, and wept upon her neck. In a few moments the jailer entered, and the door was closed between the father and daughter.

On the evening of the second day after this interview, a wayfaring man crossed the drawbridge at Berwick from the north, and, proceeding along Marygate, sat down to rest upon a bench, by the door of an inn on the south side of the street, nearly fronting the spot where what was called the "main guard" then stood. He did not enter the inn, for it was above his apparent condition, being that which Oliver Cromwell had made his headquarters a few years before, and where, at a somewhat earlier period, James VI. of Scotland had taken up his residence, when on his way to England.

The traveller wore a coarse jerkin, fastened round his waist by a leathern girdle, and over it a short cloak of plain material. He was evidently a young man, but his beaver was drawn down so as to almost conceal his features. In one hand he carried a small bundle, and in the other a staff. Having called for a glass of wine, he took a crust of bread from his bundle, and, after resting a short time, rose to depart. Night was coming on, and a storm threatening. The heavens grew dark; the clouds rushed from the sea; sudden gusts of wind moaned through the streets, accompanied by heavy drops of rain, and the face of the Tweed was troubled.

"Heaven help thee if thou intendest to travel far in such a night as this!" said the sentinel at the English gate, as the traveller passed him to cross the bridge.

In a few moments he was upon the wide and desolate moor of Tweedmouth, which for miles presented a desert of furze, fern, and stunted heath, with here and there a copse of thick brushwood. He slowly toiled over the steep hill, braving the storm, which now raged with the wildest fury. The rain fell in torrents, and the wind howled like a legion of famished wolves, hurling its doleful echoes over the heath. Still the stranger pushed onward, until two or three miles from Berwick, when, as if unable to brave the storm, he sought shelter amidst some bushes by the wayside.

Nearly an hour had passed since he sought this imperfect refuge, and the darkness of the night and the storm had increased together, when the sound of a horse's feet was heard hurriedly plashing along the road. The rider bent his head to the blast. Suddenly his horse was grasped by the bridle; the rider raised his head, and the stranger stood before him holding a pistol to his breast. "Dismount!" cried the stranger, sternly.

The horseman, benumbed and fear-stricken, made an effort to reach his arms; but instantly the hand of the robber, quitting the bridle, grasped the breast of the rider, and dragged him to the ground. He fell heavily on his face, and for several minutes was senseless. The stranger seized the leather bag which contained the mail for the north, and, flinging it over his shoulder, rushed across the heath.

Early on the following morning the inhabitants of Berwick were seen hurrying in groups to the spot where the robbery had been committed, but no trace of the robber could be obtained.

Three days passed, and Sir John Cochrane still lived. The mail which contained his death-warrant had been robbed, and before another order for his execution could be given, the intercession of his father, the Earl of Dundonald, with the king's confessor might be successful. Grizel now became the almost constant companion of her father. Nearly a fortnight had passed since the robbery of the mail, and protracted hope in the bosom of the prisoner became more bitter than his first despair. But even that hope, bitter as it was, perished. The intercession of his father had been unsuccessful; and a second time King James signed the death-warrant. Within little more than another day that warrant would reach the prison.

"The will of heaven be done!" groaned the captive.

"Amen!" responded Grizel, with wild vehemence. "Yet my father shall not die!"

Again the rider with the mail had reached the moor of Tweedmouth, and a second time he bore the doom of Sir John Cochrane. He spurred his horse to its utmost speed—he looked cautiously before, behind, and around, and in his right hand he carried a pistol ready to defend himself. The moon shed a ghostly light across the heath. He was turning the angle of a straggling copse when his horse reared at the report of a pistol, the fire of which seemed to flash into its very eyes. At the same moment his own pistol went off, and, his horse again rearing, he was thrown from the saddle. In a moment the robber, with his foot upon the breast of the messenger, was bending over him and brandishing a short dagger, saying—

"Give me thine arms, or die!"

The heart of the king's servant failed him, and, without venturing a reply, he did as he was commanded.

"Now, go thy way," said the robber sternly, "but leave me thy horse and the mail, lest a worse thing come upon thee."

The man arose, and returned to Berwick, and the robber, mounting the horse, rode rapidly across the heath.

Preparations were making for the execution of Sir John Cochrane, and the officers of the law waited only for the arrival of the mail with the second death warrant, when the news arrived that the mail had again been robbed. For fourteen days the prisoner's life would be prolonged. Putting his arms about his daughter, he said, "It is good. The hand of heaven is in this!"

"Said I not," replied his child, and for the first time she wept, "said I not that my father should not die?"

The fourteen days were not past when the prison door flew open, and the Earl of Dundonald rushed to the arms of his son. His intercession with the confessor had been successful, and, after twice signing the warrant for the execution of Sir John, the king had sealed his pardon.

He hurried with his father from the prison to his own house; his family were clinging around him, shedding tears of joy. Grizel alone was absent. They were marvelling with gratitude at the mysterious providence that had twice intercepted the mail, and saved his life, when a stranger craved an audience. Sir John desired him to be admitted, and the

quondam robber entered; he was dressed in a coarse cloak, and coarser jerkin, but his bearing seemed beyond his condition. On entering, he slightly touched his beaver, but did not remove it.

"When you have read these," said he, taking two papers from his bosom, "cast them into the fire."

Sir John glanced them over—started, and became pale. They were his death warrants.

"My deliverer," he exclaimed; "how—how shall I thank thee—how repay the saviour of my life? My father—my children—thank him for me!"

The old earl grasped the hand of the stranger—the children embraced his knees. He pressed his hand to his face and burst into tears.

"By what name," eagerly inquired Sir John, "shall I thank my deliverer?"

The stranger wept aloud, and raising his beaver, the raven tresses of Grizel Cochrane fell over the coarse cloak.

"Gracious heavens!" exclaimed the astonished and enraptured father, "my own child—my own Grizel!"

It is unnecessary to add more. The reader can supply the rest, and we have only to add that Grizel Cochrane, whose heroism we have briefly sketched, was the grandmother of the late Sir John Stewart, of Allendank, in Berwickshire, and the great-grandmother of Mr. Coutts, the celebrated banker. Consequently she was the great-great-great-grandmother of Baroness Burdett-Coutts.

## THE HOLE OF SALVATION.

A TRUE STORY OF A WONDERFUL ESCAPE.

FRANCESCO RISO, a fontaniere of Palermo, with eighty-eight other citizens, began the Rebellion of 1860. On the evening of April 3rd they concealed themselves in the Gancia, intending to sally forth at dawn and take possession of the public buildings—the Zecca and Finanze—in that quarter. At the same time, acting in concert, their friends without were to rise and carry other important points in the town. The bell of the Gancia was to be the signal, the tricolour their badge, and their watchword "Viva l'Italia et la Liberta!"

It was a well-laid plan, and should have succeeded. But while the patriots were in hiding, a traitor had gone to Maniscalco, the Director of Police, and revealed the entire plot—time, signal, names, everything. Speedily troops filled the Piazza Marina, cannon were placed fronting the Gancia, guards were stationed at the rear; and so far as the eighty-nine popolani were concerned, the revolution was over before it had begun. In the face of their certain doom, however, they fought like heroes; and, entrenched in the Gancia, maintained themselves almost two hours. Then, many being killed, and Riso himself mortally wounded, the survivors sought such safety as they could.

The majority, against the advice of Gaspare Bivona who was next in authority to Riso, took refuge among the rafters, between the ceiling and roof of the church, where they were soon found. Some sprang down among the soldiers and tried to cut their way through; many were killed, hardly one escaped. Those who surrendered were taken to Porta San Giorgio, a few days later, and shot, among them, old Giovanni, father of Francesco Riso. The latter, mortally wounded, was removed to the hospital, and died there from his injuries.

Meanwhile, Filippo Patti had joined his fate to Bivona's, and their escape is in great part due to the latter's astuteness and steady nerve. First of all, they fled over the roofs to the Campanile, but seeing that the convent was surrounded and safe descent would be impossible, they clambered down to the roof. There, looking through a skylight, they perceived two of

on their knees, below, praying. Their rap upon the glass instantly directed toward them two frightened faces, but for some time they could get no answer to their signs, the priests evidently fearing that they were spies.

At last, however, they were told, by signs, of course, that if the window were open, it was possible to climb down, by means of the cornice and woodwork. With a blow of his fist, Bivona broke the glass. The blood spurted out from a severed vein in his wrist, but twisting a handkerchief about it like a vice, he tied the knot with one hand and his teeth, and then managed to swing himself down, followed by Patti.

By the time they were down, the monks had vanished, but were found in one of the side chapels, praying to all the saints for safety. The fugitives made it clear they were not spies, although to be friends—in this crisis—was almost fatal. But they were brothers in misery, and there was no longer any fear of betrayal. From the body of the church they fled to a small room at the opposite end from the high altar, full of chairs, which were stored here when not in use. A lane was hastily opened in the mass, and they crawled in, twisting themselves here, there, anywhere, so as to be out of sight, and as far from the front as possible. Then the monks replaced the wooden files above and in front of them, shut the door and went back to their praying.

It was well they had made haste, for in less than half an hour the soldiers entered. Little of the church escaped search; even among these chairs they plunged and pried with their bayonets, but luckily hit no one, and after several trials went away.

In this cramped and painful confinement, the fugitives remained until the third day. At the close of the second, the Gancia, now supposed to be empty, was locked up, although still strictly guarded without. Half dead from hunger, thirst and cramp, but somewhat reassured by the silence, this small remnant of Francesco Riso's troop emerged from its retirement, and entered the church. The first thing the men saw was the holy water font—as good luck would have it, half full; and they drained it, to the last drop. "Never was

water more truly blessed," said Bivona; "Aqua benedetta, sicuro!"

Now, in their long hiding among the chairs, he had been considering what better refuge there might be, and had remembered a vault below the church, next the street, which opened by a trap door into a room used as a vestry. Here the conventual dead were laid away, each on his shelf, but otherwise uncoffined; and the probabilities were that no one would seek the living in such companionship. So the semi-dead prized open the ponderous, iron-shod door, and entrusted themselves to those who were dead.

Just below the ceiling of the vault were several small, heavily-barred windows; and, as the sound of life and the fresh spring air came pouring in, the captives were roused to new exertions. They must die of hunger if they stayed; they could no more than die, if discovered, and they decided to take their chances. They were feeble; still they managed to pile the good brothers of the Gancia, one above the other, until, from this standpoint of mortality, they could reach a window.

The first who looked out promptly dodged; sentinels were pacing up and down before the building; and at the corner, where two streets crossed, was stationed a large guard. But, watching their chance as the sentinels passed, they made signs to a woman in an opposite café. They were seen, they were understood, and all were eager to help. Their first, most pressing need was food, and this was conveyed to them most adroitly by a cab-driver, brother to Patti.

As though by chance, he stopped his cab close to the window; again, as by chance, several people stopped in front of the cab, talking busily together; and thus screened, he thrust in at the grating a roll of bread and a short, pointed iron bar. When they had a hole, he hurriedly told them, they must signal; then the people would get up a quarrel to call off the guards and favour the escape.

Patti was overcome at first with weakness and despondency, and wept bitterly. As to Bivona, the greater the peril, the more wiry and tensely strung he became. He cheered up his companion, and, strengthened by the bread, they set to work, aiding the slow chisel with their hands, until, on the fifth day of their imprisonment, the outermost stone lay loose in its socket. They rested a few seconds, then signalled that they were ready.

The street had been quite peaceful up to now, but suddenly two women began to quarrel, their friends joined in, and a great hubbub arose. An officer passing by stopped a moment close to the window, and Bivona heard him say to a friend: "If there was a conspiracy, you may be sure these accursed women would be in it, they are always ready for a row." On he passed, little dreaming that conspiracy was actually there; and Bivona, despite the peril, could not restrain a chuckle.

In almost the same moment, at the crossing where the guard was stationed, several carts, loaded with straw, managed to run into each other. The wildest confusion ensued. The drivers cursed, threatened, came to blows; the bystanders rushed in, and, sympathetically, began to fight; those "accursed women" joined the fray, screaming loudest of all; in fact, as Bivona said, they had "a devil of a time."

Guard and sentinel gathered in haste to separate the combatants and clear the streets; such a throng was not safe, it might lead to insurrection; and while the friends of order were thus laudably engaged at one end of the Gancia, at the other appeared, feet foremost, Filippo Patti! Halfway out of the hole he stuck, and urged Bivona to help him back. "No," said the latter, "return is death to both of us; out you must go, even if in pieces."

With all his might he pushed him, while those without pulled; and in this manner, although badly scarified, Patti reached at last the street.

Then came Bivona, who, being of slender build, and going head first, emerged safely. The women covered them, as they appeared, with their clothes, hustled them behind and through the crowd, across the street, and from one friendly house to another, until they could reach the open country.

So adroitly was the affair managed that the soldiers had not even a suspicion. No sooner, however, were the fugitives safe, than—to quote a Palermitan writer—"there ceased, as if by magic, the confusion of the carts." The drivers recovered their temper as unexpectedly as they had lost it: the bystanders grew amicable and jolly; the horses trotted on; the sentries resumed their march. All was as before, with one exception. In the stone wall of the Gancia—like an eye looking out from its vaults—was a small, irregular opening.

How had it come there? Strange to say, no one knew anything about it! The people gathered around as astonished as the sentinels. "Most holy Virgin! what could they know about it? They had been watching the straw carts. A piece must have fallen out of the wall while they were not looking! Diavolo! Dio Santissimo!" (thus invoking the two strongest authorities) "Nobody had seen anything!"

The most rigid cross-questioning and search failed to elicit more than this. There had been an escape; so much was certain; and since Bivona and Patti had not been found before, it was argued, rightly, that they were the fugitives. Bivona's wife and children were treated with much harshness; but as the poor woman said, "We only knew that he was gone; we could only pray that he was safe."

So matters went, until, on the 11th of May, not quite a month from that sad struggle in the Gancia, there landed at Marsala, Garibaldi and his thousand. On the 16th they were at Calatufimi, the 17th at Aleamo, the 18th Partinico. By the 25th they had reached Misilmeri, the 26th Gibilrossa, and the 27th saw their triumphant entry into Palermo. Before November of this year the campaign was ended—Italy was free!

And Bivona! He had joined Garibaldi, of course; and fought with him bravely, as you may suppose. But, after a while, some chronic ailment disabled him for active service, and he was voted a small pension. Small as it was, it soon ceased to be paid; and for the last ten years he struggled hard with illness, poverty, and the care of a large family. This, says Signor Salvo, is the way one's country pays its debts!

Yet something may be urged for poor, debt-oppressed Italy. She "pays thus," often, because she is unable to do otherwise.

And, in spite of his barren pension, Bivona can still say, with all the fire of patriotism that first led him to rebel, "Viva Italia! Viva la Liberta'."



## THE MAN MY SISTER MARRIED.

## CHAPTER XIX.

GRANDFATHER came with a carriage to take Katherine and Justina to the station, and while Aunt Marg got ready to walk with me, I went down to say good-bye to Liz. The good soul was sitting in the kitchen her apron over her face, sobbing.

"Good-bye," I said. "If I have been horrid to you lately, I am sorry; I have tried to be better than I used to be."

"Yo' allus blessed child; I told Miss Margaret so this mornin', an' ef ebber I scold yo', Miss Vi'let, I eat ebby word, I do."

"The scoldings were never very bad, Liz; and now you must be doubly kind to Aunt Marg and grandfather; they think so much of you. You were going to lose me anyway, when I was——." But I choked then. I could not say "John's wife."

"Sometimes I think the old house would have been happier, more peaceful, if wilful Letty Lombard had never crossed its threshold."

"Doan yo' tear a pusson's heart all ter pieces, Vi'let, an' yo' know well nuff a house 'thout young folks es jes' a graveyard. De Lawd bless yo' and keep yo'! I'll see yo' married 'fore I die, I suah ob dat, sartin suah."

"Aunt Marg," I said, as we walked across the beach to the town, "I would give him to you if I could."

"He would not be given," she smiled, something like her old self once more; "what a brave child you are, and I begin to think you have chosen the best way. It was the real Letty after all, and we almost missed knowing her. Poor little pilgrim! What a dreary journey lies before you. Don't hope for much from her. I can tell you now, and you will soon see it, her nature will never change; yours will be a thankless task. Thank God, there is between you and your sister Katherine not one trait in common, and there never will be."

We parted near the town, and how much more I would have said, how much more loving I would have been, had I dreamed it was my last farewell to Aunt Margaret! How well she read my sister Katherine. There never was any liking between us, nor did she give me any gratitude, but I made her last hours easier, and that repaid me.

Grandfather tried not to cry when he said "Good-bye." He was very cold and distant to Katherine, but he came back the second time to bless me and give me comforting words.

"Let the old sailor blood tell in ye, Letty. The Lombards were a brave lot, no storm or sea ever drove them from their duty." Then he wrung my hand and hobbled off, looking, oh, so old and bowed; for this last trial had been hardest of all his many sorrows to bear.

At last, in San Antonio, in the city of the Alamo! Through quaint narrow streets, paved with cobble-stones, by walled houses with small, shuttered windows and wide porches; by fine old mansions bowered in trees; over bridges, so many of them, crossing the winding little river that kisses many shores and ripples under the home walls and by the gardens, so friendly to the folks there, one might fancy it a household spirit of goodwill.

Then leaving Katherine at the hotel with Justina, I went out to see the man grandfather had told me to find. A telegram had been sent, and he had engaged a house for us, the very one where I lived with Justina five years of my life. He was friendly and kind, but seemed to have a horror of meeting my sister; so I told him there was nothing more he could do, and that he had made everything easy for me. I remembered him instantly as one of the judges at the Hotel Gilbert.

I got a carriage, and then Katherine, Justina, and I drove out to our dwelling-house. We passed the market-place, with its busy throng of Mexicans, with their wares, tables spread out with Mexican dainties, stalls with luscious fruit and vegetables, carts loaded with mesquite and corn-husks, drawn by lean oxen with those great sharp horns, or shambling, queer-jointed horses in rope harnesses; past the cathedral of San Fernando, where Justina crossed herself, muttering prayers; out through tree-bordered, quiet streets to a wide

country road, by green fields and ploughed land, past ranches and pastures, past adobe huts, where black-eyed, olive-skinned children played in the sun, where their swarthy mothers gossiped by shady doors, smoking cigarettes, and men lolling by the gates, chatting with neighbourly idlers. A sunshiny, pleasant race, enjoying time as colder-blooded, busy people never do.

"It's odd to say good-bye," muttered Katherine; "that Mexican there does not know I have looked upon him for the last time. He isn't aware I've looked at all. It isn't often one rides in one's own funeral procession, keenly interested in the passing panorama. Adieu, San Antonio, and a certain quaint river-kissed house, where I lived in hiding, in the enemy's very camp, six happy weeks. You knew me then, you Mexican crone. Was I not beautiful?"

"Dios, so beautiful,"

cried Justina, "and you gave me gold too."

"You never betrayed me, either, and Dean feared you might."

"She was paid," I said crossly; "Justina likes gold."

Justina laughed wickedly. "Chica a wise old child."

I began to respect Justina a little, for she never told Katherine I knew anything of the past, and never a word of John.

"Tell me how I looked that day?" Katherine asked, with feverish eagerness; the saddest thing in her sickness was that clinging to her past.

"I was in the forest, the gnarled old trees planted by the good fathers near the Mission Concepcion," said Justina, crossing herself reverently; "I carried Chica—she was so strong too in her legs, she could walk in a year—and a lady rode up on a big horse; she wore a green habit, a sombrero with a plume and shining stones, such beautiful ones; and her eyes were so big and bright. 'Is that Mary Lombard's child?' she asks; she gave me three shining gold pieces, and I told her 'yes,' and then I knew her to be Chica's sister. My cousin had told me of her, so beautiful! so wicked! I put holy water on her gold, but it brought me no harm, though I feared it. She asked me about Señor Scott, and I told her



*We passed the market place.*

they were all gone into Mexico. Then Chica cried for the horse, and I lifted her up, and she clung so brave to the creature's mane—she was never afraid, my baby. Then the Colonel"—Justina hesitated.

"Oh, Miss Prim knows I ran away with Dean; I told her," Katherine said carelessly.

"The Colonel had no eyes for Chica; he was afraid; so they went away, paying me well." I told you Señor Scott wept big tears because he thought you dead, and you laughed, you were so gay."

"Yes, and now I am so cold, so barely alive, and yet it's unchanged here. It mocks one to come back. Give me my brandy, Prim, I'll shut my eyes." She lay back in the carriage, so exhausted we had to carry her into the house. She was dreadfully light for such a tall woman.

Oh, that dark house, its low-studded rooms, its narrow-shuttered windows, its white walls shining in the sun, its damp, earthy odour, and the shadow of the Mission that shut out our daylight like some tall mountain peak. How, as time went on, that crumbling ruin drew me into its past, of days that were and are no more; of death and decay; of falling walls and ruined arches; of a mossy turret and a ghostly bell that clanged when the wind blew, as if rung by some priestly hand, calling those dusky converts from labour to prayer.

A year of my life I lived in its shadow, such a time as the prisoner of Chillon endured, each hour marked by the light on his prison walls, each night period by the clanking of his chain following his lagged steps.

I would not have complained, in all that weary time, had Katherine been kind, but she met all my advances with an icy wall of indifference. To-day was nothing to her; she lived in her past, talked of her beauty, her power; pictured strange scenes in Europe; people that made her world, and all the gaudy, unreal pleasures of a life such as hers had been, until sometimes, with smarting eyes and burning cheeks, I stole away unseen, trying to keep from shuddering, or showing that disgust I felt that would have made her hate me more.

What dreadful nights I spent trying to ease her pain, lifting her weary head to my breast, holding her in my arms, fanning her, doing all that human power could do to help her, and she, fighting her disease with fierce defiance of death, rising at midnight to sit by the open window, to look at the stars and feel the cool air across her dry lips, or to be carried to the shadow of the Mission, there to lie the long day through and think; ah, what tainted and wicked thoughts!

Not a word of regret or remorse, not a sigh for the future, only a fight against the present. She liked Justina, and I was so glad of that. Even in Katherine's worst days she would chatter Spanish with my nurse, and try to smoke a cigarette, and delight in stories that Justina told of her Mexican cousins and their many love affairs.

She would play *monte* with her and quarrel over her gains; but me she only called Prim, bore with me in a tolerant way, and let me wait on her. She never thanked me or called me sister, and for her sake I had given up my best beloved. Some days the thought of him and Mexico would come to me, and in agony I would go away from the house to the Mission to fight my battle there.

I went under the arched doorway, its façade gorgeous with niched saints, some headless, some niches bare, and some perfect apostle, saved from vandal hand; and, nearest heaven, chubby baby faces smiling from the grim old place. Then into the ruined chapel, its beautiful dome fallen in, domed by high heaven now; its solid marvellous masonry, the product of such patient unskilled labour made perfect by slow degrees; then on to a long corridor, with ruined arched windows lining on either side.

Here there was no floor, and many of the arches were shattered, but how graceful and pleasing they were; and at nights from my window I imagined the slow moving procession of black-robed figures, clouds of incense floating on the fragrant air, soft echoes of Latin hymns borne over the listening fields upward to the sky. I saw dark, solemn faces, prayerfully clasped hands, and bowed, reverent heads. I fancied a

shrinking throng of converts listening to the strange words, half comprehending, but wholly awed and pious-minded.

With them I, too, have cried, "Teach me Thy wondrous comfort, O God; give me the stern repression of self of those righteous men—their faith, their steadfast purpose."

Beneath that arched corridor I wandered in mouldy underground cells where those fathers must have slept or kept their lonely vigils. Did they never fear, when they laid down to rest, that some bronze-faced savage would forget their teachings, and, from some word of offence, some unwillingly performed command, would creep, knife in hand, to murder them in their helplessness?

Like the panther and all coward things springing upon slumbering prey, and then fleeing with blood-dripping blade to rouse, with the half-forgotten war-cry, all that dusky throng, to set the red torch and by the blazing light send all those good men to their last account, and leave the smouldering ruins to tell the tale?

And yet, as time went on, that quiet desolate place taught me patience. At first I saw only death and decay, its history was not written, the memory of its good men had vanished like a cloud of dust from the sun-dried road. Its teaching had fallen into barren ground, gone from those savage tribes, not even a tradition left. It gave me no hope for better things. It mocked my sacrifice.

But then, one day, I dreamed, a good deed is never forgotten, it lives in men's lives, it is written strength for the future. One Christ life has lived through all the centuries; men have died for Him, and these Mission fathers gave their learning, their years to Him; the power of faith and love that brought them here outlives those mouldering walls, outlives all time.

To write of a year is only to pen a few brief lines, but to live a year like that is such a dreary period, for like Justina's beads, its days must be counted one at a time. I never left Katherine when she wanted me. I sang to her, played the games she taught me, read to her, and when she was too weak to talk of her past, told her the brightest pictures in mine.

She would listen, her great eyes on the Mission, half-heeding, but if I ceased she would tell me pettishly to go on. I grew to have a horror of the house, almost of her, but Justina comforted me. She was always cheerful and gay, smoking interminable cigarettes, lying in the sun.

I like to think, as time went on, I never reckoned the days, nor hoped for any release. I only prayed that Katherine would change and be better, but she never did. I grew old and careworn. Justina said I was a girl no longer. I gave my youth to my sister Katherine.

Mrs. Scott sent me things for Katherine every week, dainties she would eat, fruit and flowers from the garden.

"What a good woman she is," Katherine said one day, "and so rare in this life, a good woman who can forgive." She made me dress her in the pretty gowns sent, and arrange her hair a dozen different ways, when she was so weak she could hardly lift her head. Once she said:



I . . . climb the dizzy stairs.

"What a spiritless thing you are, Prim! Margaret made you like herself."

"Chica was so gay once," put in loyal Justina.

"Gay? That Puritan!" sneered Katherine; "I wish you could have seen me before I lost my grip on life."

One morning Justina persuaded a priest to come and see Katherine. She used to go to the Mission Concepcion, where services were held once in a while. Katherine was pleased to see a stranger, but I fancy he found his errand fruitless. They chatted in Spanish quite a while. He was a pleasant-faced old man, with very shrewd eyes. Outside the house he talked with me, saying that she was very near the end. "Justina has told me all about you," he said in such a friendly way that I broke down and told him about my sorrow that Katherine would not change; and then I described the Mission, and what it was to me.

"I go in that little door and climb the belfry stairs, and up there—on the crumbling roof, among the tiny flowers that grow in the crevices, and the harmless creeping things that bask in the sunshine—I talk with some old father. I tell him all my troubles, and, though he says nothing, I go away comforted. I wonder if some good soul does not wander back there to that loved place; it cost them such sacrifice and labour, I should think they could not forget."

He smiled at me very gently. "One cannot gather grapes from thistles," he said, in his soft Spanish; "your sister will not change. You can only soothe her physical sorrows, her mental ones are with God." After kindly, comforting words, he rode away, and left me feeling happier than for many days.

He was our only visitor save the doctor, a gruff-voiced, kind-hearted old man from the city, who always left, declaring Katherine was so insolent that he would not come again, but insisting on looking at my tongue, and giving me directions for my own health.

She had been up all day. She would not lie down, and old Justina and I had carried her to the Mission and back, and then I had taken her in my arms, on our favourite couch by the window, and Justina had quietly sent our messenger, a ragged Mexican, for the doctor. As night came on, and she wanted me to talk, she being too weak to speak, I went on and told her of my childhood.

I pictured the old house by the sea, the shining sand, the foam-crested waves, curling under the sunlight. I showed her myself, a little lonely child, running with flying hair along the shore, gathering shells, and talking to the sea-fairies I loved and thought could hear me. I told her how I flung the tiny



My sister Katherine was dead.

shell creatures into the sea that they might live, and after a storm I always went out to fetch them back, that they need not suffer, when the cruel waves had stranded them.

I told her of happy, innocent days, and then as the darkness came on, and a single star shone over the ruin so near, I told her of the Mission, and all my fancies.

"I almost see those good men," she gasped. Darkness fell on us in that silent room, and I held her close. If sometimes, my tears dropped on her hair, I think she did not notice them, but if a sob choked my words she told me querulously to go on. Outside, Justina chatted with a neighbour in the soft patois of her race, and afterwards she sat on the doorstep, and I heard her telling her beads.

Later, the sound of hoofs woke Katherine from a gentle sleep, and she cried sharply: "Who is that?"

"Perhaps the doctor was passing," I said evasively; "he always comes in when he is out this way."

"You sent for him," she cried; "am I so bad?" Even then the death dew was on her forehead, but she pushed me from her. "You would hurry me into my grave."

She staggered to the door. "I will not die," she muttered to the doctor, as he stopped there and looked at her with tenderest pity; "I will not go into the dark, I am young, I shall live. The air revives me, I have suffered this way so often." Then that dreadful cough, and she fell forward. He lifted her on to the bed, but in a moment she sprang up with a cry.

"Letty, if they put me there I shall die. Hold me higher on your shoulder; is the window open? How close it is in this little house! Like a coffin. It smells of the grave. It is the grave."

The doctor lit the lamp.

She moved uneasily, clasped my hand, tried to speak; I think she would have said some word of love, I know she would, but only from her lips came one word, "Letty," stifled and far away. She grew so still after that, her head so heavy on my breast. Suddenly all the world was lost to her, who had done so much to add to the burdens of humanity, so few good deeds to come like flowers from her grave.

The doctor and Justina lifted her gently on the bed, my arms were empty, something had gone from my present never to come again. The long year, with all its pain and weariness, its futility of aid to good, its bitter, bitter heartbreak, was blotted from my life; my sister Katherine was dead!



She staggered to the door

(To be concluded next week.)

## ROSE.

JOHN GANT drew himself behind a pillar of the verandah and pulled his slouch hat further over his eyes, as he felt the gaze of a passer by the little country inn, rest curiously upon his disfigured face. He had not yet become accustomed to being stared at.

The fresh spring morning had no charm for him, for he felt that his life was ruined. He looked over at the tiny vine-trellised cottage with a bitter sigh and a rebellious spirit. He had come from the hospital to his old home and for a whole week had been so near to Rose that twenty steps would have carried him to her side; and yet he had kept his room until this, the morning of his departure, fearing by chance to meet her.

He had sent coldly polite notes of thanks for the many gifts of flowers and books which had come to him from her kind hands; and though his heart cried out in bitter protest he resolved that he would never see her again. He would rather die than see her shrink from him in disgust.

Moodily he smoked his cigar and reviewed the past—the long years of toil and study in distant London, his admission to the bar, his first speech before a jury—a speech that had won the plaudits and bright predictions of his colleagues. How full of promise life had seemed! But everything bright had come to an end on the day of the accident.

The explosion of a gun in his own hands had robbed his right eye of its sight, torn his cheek frightfully, and left his mouth so twisted and scarred that he started in horror when he first saw its reflection in the mirror. The publicity of the court would be intolerable to him now. He must work at something away from the eyes of men.

Suddenly a sweet young voice rang out in a merry song, behind the tall hawthorn hedge, and in an instant the man was on his feet.

It was Rose. The desire to see her once more overpowered him. His cigar and resolution were alike forgotten. He ran down the steps and sprang through a gap into a little flower garden, where a slender brown-haired girl on her knees was searching among the wet leaves for violets.

"Good-morning, John," she said, quietly. "See! I have quite a nice little bunch. Papa had his yesterday morning; these are for you. Kneel down here while I pin them on."

And the young fellow knelt at her side and shut his teeth tightly together, while with dew-wet fingers she pinned the fragrant cluster on his coat.

How sweet she was! how dangerously kind and oblivious!

He must not stay; he could not trust himself longer.

They both rose, she blushing a little at her nonsense.

"I have come to bid you good-bye, Rose," he said, almost curtly. "I have sufficiently recovered, I think, to go back to work, and I leave for London within an hour. Rose, I want you to know how deeply grateful I am for your many acts of kindness. I have seemed cold and unappreciative, but I have not been indifferent. Heaven knows I have not! I shrunk so from meeting you; but I believe you will understand it all."

The girl looked at him with an aching heart. Yes, she understood. Oh, the pity of it all! That stalwart figure, so suggestive of power and strength; that noble heart, cherishing only kindness for every living creature; that bright mind, sharpened and cultivated by closest study; that indomitable will, which had overcome all sorts of obstacles and won success at last; all these attributes of a grand character to be shadowed by an external flaw!

She looked at the red scarred face, and could have cried aloud in her anguish for him.

"Rose," he continued, "I had something I meant to tell you soon, but it will never be told now. God bless you, little friend, the thought of you will always be my sweetest pleasure and safeguard."

He wrung her hand in farewell, and turned to go.

"John!"

He wheeled and came back a step.

"What was it you had meant to tell me?"

"I cannot tell you now," he said, desperately; "it would not be right; you do not understand—"

"But I want to know, John," persisted the girl, staring at the violet bed with glowing cheeks.

"Don't torture me, Rose. You must have known that ever since you were a little girl and I carried your books to the old tumble-down school over there, I have worshipped the ground you walked on. I meant to have asked you to be my wife; but now—"

"I know what you would say, John. Listen. Almost since I can remember you have been my champion, my adviser, my hero. I revere your strong pure nature. I have watched with pride your success in the busy world. I shall feel honoured, John, to become the wife of so good and true a man."

"Rose!" ejaculated the young fellow, seizing her hands and looking at her in mingled doubt and delight; "you do not mean it, dear. You do not comprehend what you are saying."

"It is you who fail to comprehend, John. God looks at the heart, not the outward appearance, and a good woman's love is akin to God. I learned long ago to love the sweet unselfish soul within you. And do you suppose that this 'blemish' of the face will change one iota of that affection?"

"Oh, John, how little you understand a woman's heart! Wait!" she cried, as he attempted to draw her into his arms.

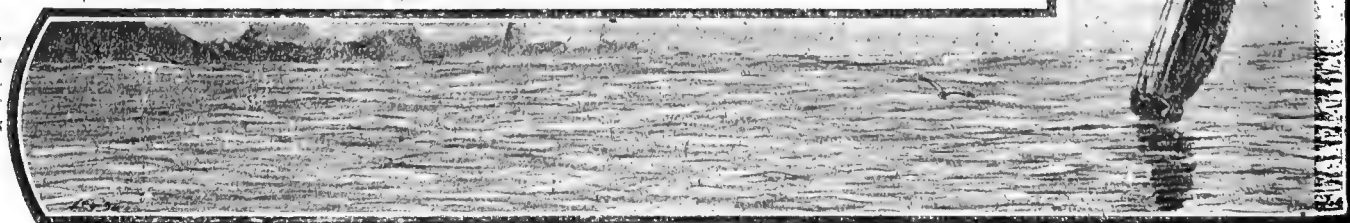
"I am going to say something that will hurt you. You were a very handsome man, and you were very vain. Do you know that personal vanity is one of the weakest of weak things in a man? I deplored it in you, for it was the one flaw in your character."

"Forgive me, John. Your beauty of face is gone for ever, but your beauty of character is untouched, and may be enhanced if you will but bear your affliction in a manly, patient spirit. Where is your faith, John? You taught me long ago to trust in God's wisdom and goodness. Do you not see that he is dealing with you in love, and that all these things will work together for your good?"

"Rose, my love, my little comfort!" cried the man in broken tones.

"Yes, I see, I see! God is good. He has given me youth and health and your best love. I will never doubt Him again. Oh, Rose, the scales have fallen from my eyes and my duty seems clear. How weak I have been! I will not give up my beloved profession, but will rise superior to this morbid sensitiveness which is but a species of the vanity you have spoken of and with God's help, will yet make an honoured name for us both."

"Oh, Rose," he cried, stretching out his hands to her in pathetic tenderness, "do you know what you have done? You have given me back faith and hope, and life is once more worth the living. What may I not yet accomplish with you at my side?"





# The Human Crocodile.

The news spread like wildfire, and the disturbed and terrified villagers in the water scrambled for the shores, and stood watching the surface to see if it were broken by the snout of the monster. But nothing at all was seen, and a party of men set out in one of those queer little boats that

you see on the Ganges, armed with spears and old muskets and torches, and searched for the crocodile.

They hurled their spears and fired their guns at random into the water, they shouted themselves hoarse, they splashed the water with their paddles. But the women, standing on the banks, saw the glare of their torches as they came back up the stream again, and

heard the unsatisfactory and vexing news that there was no sign of the animal they were looking for, or of any other.

Next day a couple of men from the home of Soron were told off by

her father to watch the spot where the accident had taken place, which they did, armed with muskets, which they never had occasion to fire, because all through the day not a ripple broke the tranquillity of the stream, except where the branches of the overhanging trees pierced its surface.

At the end of a week confidence returned, and the people—thirsting for a cooling dip at twilight—ventured into the river. And Soron went also with her maids, after her wary father had sent a couple of damsels from the village to bathe in the fatal spot before his daughter went; and nothing further occurred to alarm them until one evening Bandri, who had found the favour her mistress used to bestow on the unfortunate Mitti—

anxious to exhibit her pluck—waded out in mid-stream after a glittering bracelet that she saw clinging to a floating branch, and shared the fate of her former companion.

They had all been watching her as she slowly made her way nearer and nearer towards the branch, and then they saw her throw up her arms and disappear when she was within a yard of her goal. When the scare that seized the people abated, and no signs of a crocodile could be discovered by the men who went out in boats to search, Hissar, Soron's father, propounded a theory that there was a pool of some sort or other in mid-stream into which both the unhappy girls must have stepped.

This theory, however, was knocked on the head by the village fakir, who argued that if this were so the bodies would be washed ashore, if not just at that spot, within a reasonable distance.

Hissar, Soron's father, thought it wasn't worth while to hunt about on the off chance of finding the bodies, and after a week or two gave his daughter permission to resume her bathing, provided that she avoided the place where the other girls had gone.

For several nights peace was restored in the place, and the evening sport was resumed without fear of interruption; in fact most of them had forgotten all about the incidents until one night, when Soron's eyes caught sight of a gold bangle encircling the branch of a tree floating over the fatal spot.

She called the attention of her maids to it, and commanded one of them to fetch it for her, as she wanted it. The girl, however, grew frightened and went out on to the bank, followed by her companions, in spite of the threats of their mistress, whose covetousness filled her with a wild desire to obtain what she might have seen was obviously impossible to obtain without the loss of a life.

Wading ashore and seizing her long robe, she tied a stone in the end of it and made her way out again, while the girls watched breathlessly from the banks. Slowly she went towards the coveted treasure, until she was within a couple of yards; then pausing, she swung the gauze, lasso fashion, over her head, and threw it out, intending to catch the twig and drag it towards her.

THE power of the big yellow sun that had burned fiercely and relentlessly all day long upon the parched vegetation and lethargic natives round about the town of Kurki, up near the Siwalik Hills, began to wane as he sank unwillingly behind the rugged summits of the Kumaons, shooting his dying rays with unwonted brightness across the wooded landscape.

All day long he had poured his heat down, causing the earth to harden and crack, and the Hindoos to seek shelter as best they could beneath the roofs of their huts. It had been as if the copper-coloured sky were the bottom of a gigantic furnace, and the sun a hole in it.

The sluggish waters of the Ganges moved along inertly, as if the exertion to race were too great; the leaves of the mangoes that shadowed its surface in places remained unmoved the whole day long; an unwary, bright-plumaged bird started to chirp, but he gave it up; a snake rustled quietly in the long grass, then, coiling itself, fell asleep.

Scarcely a sound had broken the silence throughout the day; but as the short twilight overshadowed the broad fields and the jungle, a gentle murmur arose, gradually swelling into a hubbub, as the natives came out of their homes and trooped to the riverside, there to enjoy the tepid waters, and to disport themselves before the inky darkness, indignant to the climate, fell upon the land.

On a slight eminence, on the outskirts of the village, stood the house of a wealthy Hindoo, and from one of the doors several young girls came out and made their way, laughing and talking, to the banks of the Holy River, at some distance from the spot where the people of a lower caste were bathing.

Each girl was clad in a light gauzy robe, and her dusky arms and ankles were encircled with heavy gold rings that clanked and jingled as she walked. One of them, more stately and less given to frivolity than the remainder, led the way. She was Soron, the daughter of the house.

Flinging their garments aside they plunged into the stream, splashing each other, shouting and laughing, almost mad with delight, screaming like children at play.

One, more venturesome than the rest, waded out to the centre of the river, to a floating bough, daring the other girls to follow her, and as they made their way out after her, she threw up her arms with a faint cry of despair and sank beneath the bubbling waters.

Immediately the remainder gave themselves up to wild screams and ran towards the bank. Soron's favourite maid, Mitti, had been seized by a crocodile! There was no hope of saving her now, for the reptile had doubtless finished his horrid feast. But he would have to be caught and killed by the men of the village, otherwise the place would be absolutely unsafe for future bathing purposes; and so the girls hurried back to the home and raised the alarm; but there was an end of Mitti, without a doubt.

Three times she threw, three times she failed; and in a paroxysm of rage, she cast aside her weapon and forced herself through the water, reaching out her hand, and grasping the bauble with a shout of glee. But, as she turned to come back, she fell forward on her face, screaming with fright, and disappeared, a few bubbles floating softly over the spot where, a second before, she had stood in exultant triumph.

Immediately a wild howl rose from the banks. The women sank on the ground, beating their breasts and tearing their hair. None dared venture to break the news to their master, who would have them every one killed, and so they sat and howled until the people from the village came to their aid, only to guess by the absence of Soron what had really happened.

That night, until the first streaks of the breaking dawn tinted the western sky, Hissar hovered about the spot where his daughter had gone, in a boat with half-a-dozen men, alternately firing his gun into the stream, shouting, tearing his hair, and swearing at the cowed villagers.

But, by the time the sun was well up in the heavens, he had returned to his home to find solace in sleep.

The wildest excitement lasted in the village until the next evening, when the arrival of an English hunter supplied them with a fresh source of interest. He was on his way to Saharanpur, some miles to the north-west of Kurki, and he readily accepted the hospitality of the bereaved Hissar, and stopped at his house the night.

He exhibited an immense amount of interest in the story of the mysterious spot in the Ganges, so much, in fact, that he arranged with his carriers to remain a few days in order to do his best towards lifting the veil that shrouded the unhappy occurrences.

"Your theory as regards the pool is more reasonable than that of the crocodile," he said to Hissar. "And for the very simple reason that as we passed along the banks of the stream at Kankhal, some miles down the river, we found the body of a young woman. This may have been your daughter, or one of the other women."

"Alas! sahib!" moaned Hissar, looking very miserable, and trying to suppress the tone of anxiety that he very obviously felt. "And her bangles, her rings, what have you done with those?"

"There were none on her, so far as I remember," said the Englishman.

Hissar looked incredulous, and wondered how he could best get a confession out of his guest, for the sorrow he had exhibited and felt was more for his lost jewels than for his unhappy daughter, whose love of pomp and display had resulted in her habitually wearing ornaments of considerable value.

"There were none on the body, I'm certain of that," continued the Englishman after a long pause, between the puffs of his pipe; "but," another pause, "I think I can get them back for you, or, if not, at least tell you where they have probably gone."

With this more or less reassuring piece of news Hissar became more calm, although he was convinced that the Englishman had appropriated the valuables for his own use, and, therefore, resolved to question the carriers who had come with him.

First of all, the Englishman instructed him to cause the rumour to be spread through the village that nothing more was to be feared from the pool, which he had rendered perfectly harmless, and that the women might bathe with perfect ease in that particular spot if they wished, and that they would be able to secure the luring armlet if it ever appeared again, a statement that produced a calm on the troubled spirits of the ignorant and superstitious Hindoos.

All next day the Englishman found shelter from the sweltering heat in the comfortable quarters assigned to him by Hissar, and arranged and rearranged his plans, all founded on a conclusion at which he arrived by basing his arguments on a terribly frail piece of evidence.

The news that they might bathe in safety and freedom from danger filled the villagers with gratitude towards the sahib, and, as twilight approached, they prepared to take advantage of the opportunity.

Shouting, laughing, playfully splashing one another, a bevy of girls romped in the warm waters of the river near the spot which had proved so fatal to the three unfortunate women who had lost their lives there; and the last rays of the setting sun, shooting across the stream, glinted on a bright bangle attached to a mango branch floating placidly in mid-stream. But although the water flowed gently along, rippling against the pebbly shores, the branch with the bangle did not move!

One young girl, with more confidence in the power of the Englishman than her friends, waded out towards it, hesitated a moment within a few yards, and then pressing forwards, grasped it in her hands, while at the same time a groan rose from the opposite bank followed by a shout, and, looking across she saw the light suit and white pith helmet of the Englishman.

"It was the fact that the twig had appeared on three occasions without floating down the stream that aroused my suspicions as to the truth," said the Englishman that evening

as he related his experiences to Hissar. "I knew that there must have been some trick about the thing, and the fact that the body we found was stripped of its valuables, led me to suppose that there was more likelihood of there being a connection between the two circumstances, than that they had been removed by some wandering native on the banks of the river at the place where we found it."

"I went across to-night half-a-mile down the stream in a boat I borrowed unknown, and I got opposite the spot which has been so fatal to your people. I went there noiselessly, and watched from behind a mango tree, and saw a

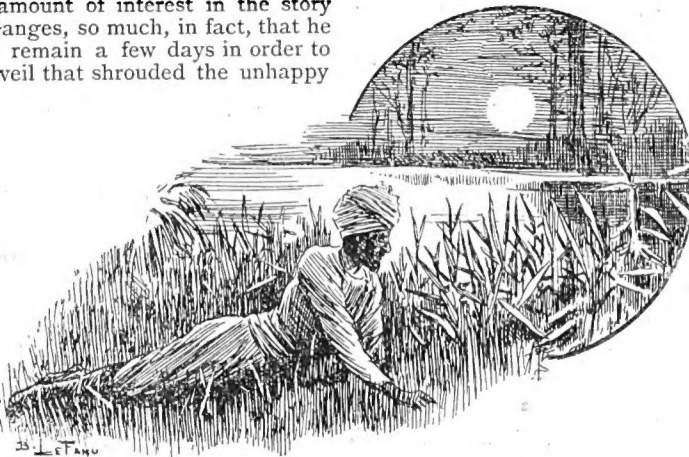
weighted rope tied to a stake leading into the water.

"The women came into the water, and one of them, as I had wished, made her way towards the branch which I saw floating in mid-stream. I heard a rustling close to my left side, and there appeared the figure of a man, a Hindoo, crouching, and moving towards the end of the rope. The girl came closer and closer to the bait, and the man laid his hand on the rope, gripping it and making ready to pull."

"Then I stepped out and knocked him on the head."

"I made an examination of the rope afterwards, and found that it was weighted, and had a noose at one end, which was evidently laid during the night on the bed of the stream under the branch on which hung the bangle, so that as the women grasped the object, the fellow pulled the rope, which tightened round their ankles, and drew them under water."

"It was a very clever idea, and he must have made a good thing out of the gold bangles, but, no doubt, you will get them back, for he has probably buried them somewhere."



"A Hindoo, crouching, and moving towards the end of the rope."

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